

Students



In the 2010-2011 academic year, 42,129 students were enrolled in undergraduate courses, compared with 43,118 in 2009-2010. An additional 3,837 students who were close to completing their degrees were registered for seminar papers only. Among the undergraduate students, 11,959 (28%) were new students at the OUI.

There were 3,657 students enrolled in graduate studies (including students taking qualifying courses), compared with 3,665 in 2009-2010. An additional 50 graduate students were registered for seminar papers, 63 for final projects and 45 for theses.

A "student" at the Open University is a person who registered for one or more courses and has not cancelled or deferred studies. The total number of students represents the number of people studying at the Open University. A student taking two or more courses is counted only once.

The study method at the Open University does not require students to take a structured program over a specific period. Therefore, in addition to absolute numbers, we are presenting data that enables a comparison with students pursuing a full program towards a degree (FTE – Full Time Equivalent). The calculation is based on the number of course enrollments divided by a factor that expresses the number of annual enrollments that would allow the student to complete a degree in three years. In FTE terms, 18,995 undergraduate students were enrolled at the Open University in 2010-2011 (compared with 19,656 in 2009-2010).

Financial Aid and Scholarships

The OUI awarded 2,900 scholarships in 2010-2011 in various categories (a full scholarship is the equivalent of tuition for one course). Of these, 2,707 were financial aid grants and the remainder were academic excellence and sports scholarships. In addition, 1,557 scholarships were awarded to soldiers on compulsory military service and 100 to students in national service, as well as 120 to students who were newly discharged and 13 to those completing national service.

The Office of the Dean of Students, Dr. Haim Saadoun, awarded 46 students (23 male and 23 female) Certificates of Excellence and grants in various amounts, for their achievements in representing the Open University in competitions in the past year.

Students with Special Needs

In the 2010-2011 academic year, 485 students with special needs studied at the Open University. Among these, 33 were deaf or hearing impaired; 62 blind or vision impaired; 128 with motor disabilities; and 170 had a variety of chronic medical conditions. All benefited from specially adapted study conditions and special exam arrangements, customized to their requirements and disabilities.

Story of a blind student

Arie Brender, who lives in Haifa, began studying at the Open University at the end of 1997, after completing studies at the Technion School for Practical Engineers in Haifa with honors. Until an illness caused him to lose his sight 16 years ago, he worked as a teacher at Basmat High School, a lecturer on computers at ORT vocational school and a tutor at the Technion School for Practical Engineers. He has since completed a BA in Management and Education (Curriculum & Instruction Studies) at the Open University, graduating with honors. Today Arie is successfully studying towards an MA in Education, specializing in Learning Systems.

Undergraduate students – Special populations

Arab sector	3,627
High school students	489
Soldiers in compulsory service	647
Ultra-Orthodox students *	278
Students with special needs	485
Overseas students	634
Prisoners	339

* Ultra-Orthodox students in special projects

Career Guidance and Placement

The Open University helps students and alumni to integrate into the work market by exposing them to a wide selection of employment opportunities in various fields, all over the country. Job offers are published on an innovative job seekers website, on notice boards in the various study centers and via direct mailing to the student's personal email address. Other career guidance and placement activities include:

- A virtual employment fair in which 40 prominent companies participated. A designated website was created for the fair. There were 500 jobs available in different fields, including banking and finance, software, technology, human resources, marketing and sales, administration, and customer service.
- An employment meeting for students and alumni from the Arab sector was held on the Wadi Ara campus. Jobs were on offer in several fields and participants heard a lecture on how to seek work. The event received widespread coverage in the Arabic language press.
- A special workshop directs students in job seeking methodologies and skills, on the basis of each student's individual characteristics.
- A seminar for students was held jointly with the Manpower employment agency on "Human Resources as a Route to Management."



Dana Mamriyev and Marina Levkovich took first and second place in the ASA games in individual kayaking, and together won the gold medal.

Sport at the Open University

This year's international Academic Sports Association (ASA) games saw OUI table tennis teams leading the field, with the men's team in first place and the women's team coming second. Open University athletes won personal gold medals in kayaking, table tennis, judo, open water swimming and beach tennis, and personal silver and bronze medals in table tennis, kayaking, judo, light athletics and debating.

The University again held its own internal championships for students and employees in chess, table tennis and ten pin bowling. This year a new championship in debating and a men's tennis tournament were held. The Open University debating club also organized and hosted large-scale regional and nationwide competitions.

The Student Association

The Student Association upgraded and improved services and benefits to fee-paying students, on both the academic and the consumer fronts. They also made sure that services are equally applicable to all sectors of the student population, and accessible to those living in peripheral areas and in the center of the country. This year's Student Day was the largest in the country, organized jointly with the Bar-Ilan University Student Association, under the banner of "An Israeli Night." Activities also continued in various projects, including a trip to Poland; the "Torch" project for Holocaust survivors; pre-exam marathons; grants totaling hundreds of thousands of shekels; the "Honoring IDF Reservists" project; activities in hospitals; social projects around the country; academic assistance to new and veteran students; establishment of a nationwide referral system for all students; cultural events; lectures; workshops; parties; trips; series of days volunteering in different organizations; publication of the Association's *Oops* magazine; distribution of start-of-year gifts; development of the Association's website; and the debating club.

New initiatives

Intern project: A project designed to create an opportunity for students to integrate into desirable jobs in leading companies, thus increasing the prestige of their OUI academic degree. The project improves students' ability to cope in the work market and considers their future.

"For Israel" project: A project for social leaders that aims to encourage social activism. It provides for an encounter between students from around the country, of different ages, all religions and across the full spectrum of different opinions, thus creating fruitful meetings and discussions on Israeli society. Members of Knesset and senior academics were invited and events included visits and volunteering in various social organizations in order to gain effective, real, hands-on experience.

Student Involvement in the Community

Torah study (*Beit Hamidrash*): For the fifth year running, an Open University Torah Study Center (*Beit Hamidrash*) is in operation, addressing issues of justice and society in Jewish texts. Among the issues raised this year were the image of God; attitudes to the "other"; attitudes toward women; self defense and its limits; environmental responsibility; *shmita* and sustainability; social-economic justice; the Economic Arrangements Law and/or the Wisconsin Plan; the rights of workers and unorganized workers; equality of education and health services; freedom of expression and conscience; freedom of religion and freedom from religion; collective rights and the question of the Jewish state. Some students who participated in 2010-2011 in the Torah Study Center concurrently volunteered in different organizations, in return for which two grants were awarded toward future tuition fees.

***Perach*, *Sachlav* and ISEF Projects:** This year 1,042 students tutored through *Perach* (a mentoring project for schoolchildren) and through the *Sachlav* project (enrichment programs for schools and kindergartens that function in a long-day format). Another 13 OUI students participated in ISEF, the International Sephardic Education Foundation.

Computerized Services for Students

Virtual student services continue to expand in scope, and this year witnessed further innovations, including:

Website for new students: A new website was launched especially for new Open University students, to help in their first steps at the University and familiarize them with OUI concepts.

Cellular student portal: The cellular portal enables all Open University students to monitor the academic calendar, receive information on enrollment, remain up-to-date at all times regarding tutorial sessions, grades and payments and receive notifications and referrals. In the near future, digital OUI books and video recordings of lectures and tutorials will also be included on the portal.

Identifying students with graduate potential: Provides an option to submit applications for provisional and/or final approval of degree studies, directly via *Sheilta*, for students who are close to completing their degree requirements.

Change of study center and/or study group: The new service enables students to switch study groups via *Sheilta*.

Online appeal of examination grade: A new service enables students to fill in an online form on the *Sheilta* system with details of their appeal.

Option to order a scanned examination booklet: A new *Sheilta* service enables students to order a photocopy of their exam booklet by post or receive a scanned computer file.

Parking arrangement with Tel Aviv University: Under a new arrangement, Open University students studying at the Ramat Aviv campus may now park in Tel Aviv University car parks. Students register their request online to be included in the parking arrangement and their data are automatically transferred to Tel Aviv University.